

PUBLIC NOTICE • PUBLIC NOTICE

Opportunity to Object

Ox Project Draft Decision Notice and Environmental Assessment USDA-Forest Service, Tahoe National Forest, Sierraville Ranger District Sierra County, California

The District Ranger of the Tahoe National Forest, Sierraville Ranger District, prepared a Draft Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact (DN/FONSI) for the Ox Project Environmental Assessment (EA). Under this decision, the Ox Project proposes: restorative efforts focusing on western white pine sustainability while increasing resiliency to red fir stands on approximately 151 acres with mechanical and hand treatment; to accelerate the growth and development on 497 acres of existing plantations through mechanical and hand treatment; and to hand treat approximately 27 acres of aspen communities while mechanically enhancing two acres of aspen. Public and commercial fuelwood harvest may be available within designated treatment areas. The Ox Project would temporarily use approximately 1.2 miles of tilled and non-system roads. All temporarily-used roads would be decommissioned after project implementation. The Ox Project Proposed Action has identified four sites for watershed restoration actions, including the removal of an embedded fallen bridge structure (degraded and unusable) over two perennial stream crossings in association with existing route obliteration to improve hydrologic connectivity and restore riparian systems. The project would add approximately 0.34 mile of an existing non-system route to National Forest System Routes to provide long-term access to communication infrastructure used by state and county agencies.

The Ox Project area is located in north-central Sierra County, California, south of State Route 49 adjacent to the Yuba Pass Sno-Park and within Lincoln Valley. The legal location is T19N R13E Section 2, T20N R13E Sections 26, 28, and 34, and T20N R14E Sections 11 and 14. The Ox Project Draft DN/FONSI and EA are available for review at the Sierraville Ranger District, 317 South Lincoln, Sierraville, CA 96126; or on-line at <http://fs.usda.gov/projects/tahoe/landmanagement/projects>.

This draft decision is subject to objection pursuant to 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B. Only those who submitted timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project during scoping or other designated opportunity for public comment are eligible to file an objection. Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project and attributed to the objector, unless the issue is based on new information that arose after the designated opportunities for comment.

Objections must be submitted within 45 days following the publication of this legal notice in The Mountain Messenger, the newspaper of record. The date of this legal notice is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframes provided by any other source. It is the objector's responsibility to ensure evidence of timely receipt (36 CFR 218.9).

Objections must be submitted by mail, by hand, or electronically to the reviewing officer: Eli Ilano, Forest Supervisor, Tahoe National Forest; Attn: Ox Project Objection; 631 Coyote Street, Nevada City, CA 95959, FAX: (530) 478-6109. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Electronic objections, in acceptable plain text (.txt), rich-text (.rtf) or Word (.doc) formats, may be submitted to E-mail: objections-pacificsouthwest-tahoe@fs.fed.us with subject: Ox Project.

Objections must include the following information (36 CFR 218.8(d)): (1) objector's name and address, with a telephone number, if available; (2) objector's signature or other verification of authorship; (3) identification of a single lead objector when applicable; (4) project name, responsible official's name and title, and name of affected National Forest(s) and/or Ranger District(s); (5) reasons for, and suggested remedies to resolve, the objection; and (6) description of the connection between the objection and the objector's prior comments. Documents incorporated by reference must adhere to 36 CFR 218.8(b).

For further information concerning this decision, contact: Karie Wiltshire, Environmental Coordinator, kwiltshire@fs.fed.us, phone (530) 994-3401.

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